

## A MEAN REPORT OF OUR NEGRO PROBLEM.

Mr. T. E. Moore, of Lexington, Ky., with many very pertinent comments sends to the VETERAN a page from the February Literary Digest containing an article written by an Englishman, Sir Harry Johnson, in which he discusses the "color question" of the United States in a way to arouse all the honest indignation of every Southern man and woman.

If left alone, there would be no "color question." The average negro never thinks of the line of distinction drawn between the whites and himself. It is accepted as naturally as one accepts blue skies and green grass. It is only when demagogues and ignorant agitators seeking fame not at the cannon's mouth, but by formulating strife, preach the doctrines of equality and subsoilation that there is even a socialistic ripple.

The negroes of the South have accepted and worked out the race problem to our mutual satisfaction. Many of them are hard-working, self-respecting citizens, ambitious to improve every opportunity, no more desirous of social affiliation with the whites than the whites are to grant it.

Sir Harry Johnson thunders out to an English public that it is the ignorance and prejudice of the Southern whites that keeps back the advancement of the negro. He does not seem to realize that every dollar of school tax is divided *pro rata*; that in places where the number of whites of school age predominate the number of white schools are greater, and *vice versa*, the legal division being equal. Possibly Sir Harry has never visited the South at all, and certainly he has never studied its educational outlook. The extreme poverty of the South just after the war left the question of education a very serious problem. The school tax did not meet the requirements of the whites alone, yet must be equally divided with the tens of thousands of negroes freed and made of equal rights by the Northern law. This division has gone on for over forty years. The result we see everywhere, in educational advancement, in increased knowledge of the duties as citizens, and in the moral and sanitary improvement evinced by the ownership of homes.

In Nashville alone there are several colleges whose curriculum blasts the Englishman's assertion that Southern "prejudice" has kept the negro back. The authorities at Washington have never made any appropriation to meet the great increase of negroes in Southern schools, and there has been no assistance given in this work save by individual contributions; consequently the maligned South can claim all the honor for the wonderful advancement of the negro race.

The Englishman further on in his article makes the slanderous assertion that there is no advancement possible for the South until they "close down all stale discussions of that indefensible Civil War." The causes that led to the war are too widespread to permit of a discussion in a short article. But even the foes that fought against us would not feel justified in the use of such a term as "indefensible," and coming from an Englishman the word becomes an absurdity, for even the most "ignorant" Southerner has studied sufficient English history to know that nine-tenths of the bloodiest battles England has engaged in had their cause from greed either for money or the acquirement of territory; while our fight was to maintain our constitutional rights, the same motive that inspired the patriots of '76 when they faced the armies of England and won our proud independence.

Sir Harry's whole article bristles with assertions equally as untenable. Certainly he is no logician, but there is one part of logic he is an adept in—the "Reductio ad absurdum!"